

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION MEETING OF  
THE SPRINGFIELD CITY COUNCIL HELD  
MONDAY, MAY 2, 2005.

The City of Springfield council met in a work session in the Jesse Maine Room, 225 Fifth Street, Springfield, Oregon, on Monday, May 2, 2005 at 6:30 p.m., with Mayor Leiken presiding.

ATTENDANCE

Present were Mayor Leiken and Councilors Ballew, Ralston, Lundberg, and Pishioneri. Also present were City Manager Mike Kelly, Assistant City Manager Cynthia Pappas, City Attorney Joe Leahy, City Recorder Amy Sowa and members of the staff.

Councilors Fitch and Woodrow were absent (excused).

1. Beltline Road Soundwalls.

Transportation Manager Nick Arnis presented the staff report on this item. Residents along Colonial Drive have requested that a soundwall be constructed to mitigate for traffic noise along Beltline Road due to the increased volume of traffic from the Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway and the RiverBend development.

Residents on Colonial Drive, located south of Beltline Road, have requested that a soundwall be constructed to mitigate for noise caused by the traffic that will use Beltline Road when the Parkway project is completed. Staff and Councilor Lundberg met with Colonial Drive residents on March 31, 2005 to discuss the issue and the staff proposal for a vegetative buffer and fencing to visually separate Beltline Road from Colonial Drive homes. The vegetation and fencing does not significantly block sound from Beltline Road, therefore, Colonial Drive residents requested a soundwall.

Staff estimates that a soundwall for the south part of Beltline Road from the Game Farm Road to the beginning of the commercial land uses will cost \$400,000, and to construct a wall along the north side is estimated to cost an additional \$400,000 for a combined cost of \$800,000 to \$950,000 (includes contingencies) for sound walls on both sides of Beltline Road from Game Farm Road to the commercial land uses. There are no funds in the Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway project for a Beltline Road sound wall nor are there other uncommitted capital funds in Public Works' budget available for soundwalls.

The following are three staff options from the Council Briefing Memorandum:

- Option 1. Continue with current Parkway project design that is ready for bid advertisement and not build soundwalls on Beltline Road as part of the Parkway project.
- Option 2. Amend Parkway resolution, find funding, conduct sound studies and construct soundwalls on Beltline Road.
- Option 3. Delay the decision on soundwalls on Beltline Road until staff and council can develop a soundwall policy that identifies funding sources and criteria for soundwalls on a City-wide basis.

Staff recommends Option 1.

Public Works Director Dan Brown was also present to answer questions.

Several residents from the Colonial Drive neighborhood were in the audience.

Mr. Arnis said this was one of the items the Springfield City Council and Lane County Board of Commissioners voted on when approving the MLK Parkway Project. At that time, both governing agencies voted not to include soundwalls along Beltline Road. Mr. Arnis noted that many of the residents of this area were present in the audience when that decision was made.

Mr. Arnis said staff recommended enhancing vegetation in the area, not to mitigate the sound, but to provide a barrier between Beltline Road and the neighborhood. He referred to the sound studies done by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) which showed warrants for a soundwall on the north side of Beltline Road, but not on the south side. There were no Federal Funds to construct this project. If Federal Funds were used, those types of studies would be required. The city had never built soundwalls in Springfield nor did the city have a soundwall policy. He said a soundwall had been approved along the MLK Parkway because of the close proximity to the houses along that roadway. The one soundwall that had been constructed in the Metro area was the Harlow soundwall along I-105, which was a partnership between ODOT, the City of Eugene, Lane County and residents. That wall had been somewhat ineffective.

Mr. Arnis referred to the three options as outlined in the agenda item summary (AIS) and explained each option. Staff recommended Option 1.

Mayor Leiken asked what would happen to the funding for Seaside if the vote failed. He asked if those funds could be available for this project.

Mr. Arnis said if the vote failed, the \$8.6M would have to go to the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) for recommendation. It would be an ODOT decision. There were other soundwalls that were warranted on the interchange project on the Eugene side. He said there could be a possibility of getting that funding for this project.

Councilor Pishioneri asked what decibel level warranted a soundwall. He asked if the soundwall was warranted on the south side.

Mr. Arnis said ODOT did check the area and determined that a soundwall would be warranted on the north side, but not on the south side. The consultant hired for the Parkway project concurred with ODOT's decision.

Councilor Pishioneri asked why it was warranted on one side and not the other side.

Mr. Arnis said the study was taken from the center line of traffic. The homes on the south side of the road were farther from the roadway than the homes on the north side. Mr. Arnis said Civil Engineer Kristi Krueger had worked with the soundwall consultants.

Ms. Krueger said if the sound reached sixty-five decibels, it warranted a soundwall. She said on the northern portion it did meet the warrants as did two properties on the south side. The rest of the properties on the south side did not meet the warrants. It was determined not to build the soundwalls due to the cost.

Mayor Leiken said the city did not have a soundwall policy and that may be an issue for the city to consider in the future.

Councilor Ballew said the city didn't have any funding to build soundwalls.

Councilor Lundberg said soundwalls do not always go in as expected. The Harlow soundwall did go in on an existing road. If the city went ahead on schedule with this Parkway project, there could still be the option of putting in a soundwall at a later date. Once the traffic was there, it could give the city some justification for seeking Federal funding for a soundwall. If the vegetation was put in correctly, there would still be room for soundwalls.

Mr. Brown said soundwalls could be retrofitted into this area at a later date if needed. He said the city was opening bids on the Parkway project on May 12 and would bring them to council for approval on May 16. Based on the engineers' estimates, the bids would be very close.

Councilor Ralston asked who was paying for the soundwall on the north side of Beltline.

Mr. Arnis said a soundwall was not going in on the north side.

Mr. Kelly said the north side did qualify, but was not mandated because no Federal funding was to be used.

Councilor Ralston asked who was paying for the soundwall on the south part of the MLK Parkway.

Mr. Brown said it would be paid for under several different funds. In about 1990, when the Gateway Refinement Plan was approved, the plan stated that because the MLK Parkway project was so contentious, the city had to look at soundwalls for that project. Commissioner Cornacchia negotiated a lot of things to get the plan adopted by adding that language. When the planning of the MLK Parkway project started in 1999, public works staff approached council. The width was only sixty feet and staff recommended acquiring another five feet from each side from the neighbors. Council said, at that time, that if the city would be taking additional property from the owners, a soundwall needed to be built for sound and livability. In fact, the city would be taking thirteen feet of property, so the soundwall was a good choice by council at that location. That soundwall would be more effective in mitigating sound because of the close proximity to the road and the vehicles.

Mayor Leiken said the speed limit along the parkway was 45 miles per hour. He said soundwalls usually worked best with lower speed limits. He said he wanted to do what was right for those that lived in the Colonial neighborhood, but it could be that a soundwall at that location would not work.

Councilor Pishioneri said with the close proximity of the homes along MLK Parkway, the soundwall would also be a safety barrier.

Mr. Arnis said two of the homes on the far end of the south side of Beltline exceeded the sixty-five unit decibels that were the cutoff for the criteria. The rest of the homes did not go above that limit.

Councilor Lundberg said the hospital would define the type of traffic that would change or increase along the parkway. She asked when the hospital would be opening.

Ms. Knapel said it was scheduled to open in 2008.

Councilor Lundberg said we may have time to consider the soundwall issue over the next year or two.

Mr. Kelly said council could direct staff to bring back a proposed soundwall policy in a year. He discussed the changes that could occur in that area in terms of the location of the mobile home park in the next five to ten years.

Councilor Ralston said he would be reluctant to sign a soundwall policy if the city did not have funds to build soundwalls.

Mr. Arnis asked council if they wanted construction of the parkway to begin and have staff monitor the traffic and the sound along Beltline once the parkway was completed in 2006.

Councilor Ballew said she agreed with Councilor Ralston. She said if staff came back with a policy, they should include financing options.

Mr. Arnis said staff could bring that back to council. He would talk with other jurisdictions regarding funding for soundwalls.

Mr. Brown said it would make sense to monitor this because of the increase in traffic once the hospital was built.

Council consensus was to go forward with the construction of the parkway and for staff to bring a proposed soundwall policy, with funding options, to council in a year or two. Staff would monitor the traffic on the parkway during the next year or two as well.

#### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

Minutes Recorder – Amy Sowa

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Sidney W. Leiken  
Mayor

Attest:

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Amy Sowa  
City Recorder